

What is claimed is:

1. A method for facilitating communications between persons, comprising the steps of:
  - sensing when two or more persons come in contact with one another by storing a unique code in transceiver units disposed on each of the two or more persons;
  - providing an electronic medium for entering the unique codes stored on the transceiver units; and,
  - randomly matching pairs of users based on a matching program accessible by the electronic medium.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic medium comprises a personal computer.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic medium comprises a personal computer connected to a server computer over a network.
4. The method of claim 1, comprising the further step of:
  - generating at least first and second levels of matching through the matching program;
  - permitting users who are both matched at a first level or a second level to contact one another through the electronic medium;
  - denying users who are at different matching levels the ability to contact one another through the electronic medium.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the transceiver device comprises:
  - at least one memory unit for storing the unique codes received by the transceiver;
  - and,
  - a display screen for displaying received unique codes.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein the transceiver device further comprises:

a timer circuit coupled to the at least one memory buffer; and,  
a logic circuit for manipulating the received unique codes.

7. The method of claim 5, wherein the at least one memory unit includes:

at least one buffer; and  
5 a first-in-first-out register coupled to the at least one buffer.

8. The method of claim 5, wherein the transceiver device further comprises a read-only memory for storing a particular unique code associated with the transceiver.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of randomly matching pairs of users comprises:

10 generating at least one random number from a specified pool of numbers for each user of the pair of users;  
determining if the random numbers generated for each user are equal; and,  
permitting the users to contact one another through the electronic medium if the random numbers generated for each user are equal.  
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10. The method of claim 9, wherein the step of randomly matching pairs of users further comprises:

determining if the random numbers generated for each user are within a specified range of each other;  
20 permitting the users to contact one another through the electronic medium if the random numbers generated for each user are within a specified range of each other; and,  
prohibiting the users from contacting one another through the electronic medium if the random numbers generated for each user are not within a specified range of each other.

25 11. The method of claim 1, comprising the further step of:

generating a close encounters table for display on the electronic media, said close encounters table including at least one row identifying at least one of a pair of users who have been matched by the matching program, and at least one row indicating a matching level for each at least one of a pair of users who have been matched by the matching program.

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12. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of permitting users who are both matched at the same matching level to contact one another comprises:

permitting the users to contact one another through a chat program.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the electronic medium comprises a plurality of personal computers coupled to a server computer through a network, each personal computer being associated with a particular user, and

wherein the chat program may be accessed through a hyperlink present on respective video screens of each user's personal computer.

14. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of permitting users who are both matched at the same matching level to contact one another comprises:

permitting the users to contact one another through a game program.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the electronic medium comprises a plurality of personal computers coupled to a server computer through a network, each personal computer being associated with a particular user, and

wherein the game program may be accessed through a hyperlink present on respective video screens of each user's personal computer.

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16. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic medium comprises a plurality of personal computers connected to a server computer over a network, each personal computer being associated with a particular user.

17. A computer system comprising:

at least one server computer; and,  
at least one user computer coupled to the at least one server through a network,  
wherein the at least one server computer includes at least one program stored  
therein, said program performing the following steps:  
permitting a user stationed at the at least one user computer to enter unique codes  
which correspond to persons encountered; and,  
generating a matching level for each unique code entered.

18. The computer system of claim 17, wherein said program performs the further step  
of:

permitting a user stationed at the least one user computer to register a transceiver  
device.

19. The computer system of claim 18, wherein said step of permitting a user to register  
a transceiver device comprises:

permitting a user to enter in the at least one user computer a unique code  
associated with the transceiver device;  
permitting a user to choose a login identification; and,  
permitting a user to choose a password.

20. The computer system of claim 19, wherein said program performs the further steps  
of:

validating the entered unique code;  
validating the entered login identification; and,  
validating the password.

21. The computer system of claim 17, wherein said program performs the further step of:

permitting a user stationed at the least one user computer to register encounters with other users.

5        22. The computer system of claim 17, wherein said program performs the further step of:

permitting a user stationed at the least one user computer to alter user preferences relating to which other users may contact the at least one user.

10        23. The computer system of claim 21, wherein the step of permitting a user to register encounters with other users comprises:

accepting unique codes entered by the user, each said unique code indicative of a user encountered;

comparing each said unique code entered to a database of unique codes and associated login identifications;

determining if the unique code entered corresponds to an associated login identification;

registering the entered unique code and associated login identification as an encounter if it is determined that the unique code entered corresponds to an associated login identification; and,

20        prohibiting registration of the entered unique code as an encounter if it is determined that the unique code entered does not corresponds to an associated login identification.

25        24. The computer system of claim 17, wherein the step of generating a matching level comprises:

generating a pool of numbers;

selecting first and second random numbers from the pool of numbers; and

assigning a matching level to a pair of users based on the random numbers selected from the pool of numbers.

25. The computer system of claim 24, wherein the step of generating a pool of numbers comprises generating a pool of numbers from one to a first pool number selected according to the following formula:

*first pool number = (total number of users encountered) - (number of desired winners),*

wherein the total number of users encountered comprises the number of unique codes entered, and the number of desired winners comprises a particular number selected by an operator of the computer system.

26. The computer system of claim 24, wherein the step of assigning a matching level comprises:

assigning a first matching level if the first random number selected is equal to the second random number selected;

assigning a second matching level if the absolute value of the result of subtracting the first random number from the second random number is less than ten percent of the first pool number;

20 assigning a third matching level if the absolute value of the result of subtracting the first random number from the second random number is less than seventy percent of the first pool number;

assigning a fourth matching level if the absolute value of the result of subtracting the first random number from the second random number is less than ninety-five percent of the first pool number; and,

assigning a fifth matching level otherwise.

25 27. The computer system of claim 26, comprising the further step of:

permitting pairs of users to contact other electronically based on the matching level assigned to each pair of users.

28. The computer system of claim 27, wherein the step of permitting pairs of users to contact each other electronically comprises:

5           allowing a user to select specific matching levels for electronic communications;  
              permitting only other users who meet the specified matching levels to electronically contact the user; and,

              prohibiting users who do not meet the specified matching levels from electronically contacting the user.

29. The computer system of claim 28, wherein the electronic communications comprise a chat program.

30. The computer system of claim 28, wherein the electronic communications comprise a game program.

31. A computer system comprising:

15           at least one server computer; and,  
              a plurality of user computers coupled to the at least one server through a network,  
              wherein the at least one server computer includes at least one program stored therein, said program performing the following steps:

20           permitting a user stationed at any one of the plurality of user computers to enter unique codes which correspond to other users encountered; and,  
              generating a matching level for each unique code entered.

32. A computer readable medium having embodied thereon a computer program for processing by a machine, the computer program comprising:

a first code segment for permitting a user stationed at the at least one user computer to enter unique codes which correspond to persons encountered; and,

a second code segment for generating a matching level for each unique code entered.

5       33. The computer readable medium of claim 32, wherein said computer program further comprises:

          a third code segment for permitting a user stationed at the least one user computer to register encounters with other users.

10      34. A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave comprising:

          a first code segment for permitting a user stationed at the at least one user computer to enter unique codes which correspond to persons encountered; and,

          a second code segment for generating a matching level for each unique code entered.

15      35. The computer data signal of claim 34, wherein said computer program further comprises:

          a third code segment for permitting a user stationed at the least one user computer to register encounters with other users.

20      36. A computer system whose actions are directed by a computer program configured as a multiple database information exchange management system, comprising:

          a first database of information relating to participants in a process for making random introductions electronically, stored in electronically readable memory;

          a second database of information relating to encounters which occur between the participants, stored in electronically readable memory;

a communications port suitable for transmitting and receiving data and instructions in the form of electrical signals to and from at least one remote computer; and,

5 a database manager for creating and revising records stored in said first database and said second database, responsive to said data and instructions from said at least one remote computer,

wherein only users identified by the system as vendors may create and revise the first database.

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